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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **ALEA Would be Thankful this Thanksgiving if You Remembered to Buckle Up and Drive Safely**

**MONTGOMERY** – With tens of thousands of travelers driving through Alabama during this Thanksgiving week, Troopers with the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA) are ramping up their plans to keep roadways safe for everyone and to ensure all motorists arrive alive.

During the 2020 Thanksgiving travel period, which begins at 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, Nov. 25, and ends at midnight Sunday, Nov. 29, motorists should expect heavier-than-normal traffic and plan accordingly.

ALEA Secretary Hal Taylor said, “Despite the recent pandemic, Thanksgiving is still one of the busiest travel periods of the year, as many individuals choose to drive to and from their holiday destinations. ALEA Troopers want to ensure you arrive safely to your loved ones and our agency needs your full cooperation to prevent traffic crashes in order to save lives.”

Historically, ALEA Troopers have seen an increase in traffic-related deaths during Thanksgiving. Secretary Taylor said he hopes to see a reduction in Thanksgiving roadway tragedies this year. “Our agency’s stance has always been one traffic related death is one too many, but to prevent them, it is imperative we all do our part: Obey speed limits, do not drive under the influence or while distracted, avoid following too closely, buckle up and remember, Alabama law now requires backseat passengers to buckle up as well,” he said.

During the holiday season, ALEA will increase its Trooper presence on Alabama roadways with grant funding from the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) and the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT). ALEA and its law enforcement partners throughout the state will conduct driver license checkpoints and other enforcement activities designed to discourage aggressive driving and prevent traffic crashes.

- **Obey the law:** Do not speed, follow too closely or make illegal lane changes. These are among the top deadly driving behaviors.
- **Buckle up:** No matter how short the trip, ensure everyone in the vehicle is properly restrained. As of Sept. 1, 2019, Alabama law requires all occupants within a vehicle to wear a seat belt, both in front and rear seats, or utilize a child restraint system.

- **Put away the phone and other distractions:** Make safety a priority. When behind the wheel, do not text or take any action which would distract you from the task of driving.
- **Prepare for congestion:** It is not uncommon for traffic to be heavier than usual during the Thanksgiving holiday travel period. Allow additional time for congestion along your route to and from your holiday destination.
- **Don't follow other vehicles too closely:** "Following too close" is one of the leading contributing factors behind crashes. Maintaining situational awareness and operating under a defensive driving posture is critical in avoiding crashes especially during high traffic periods.
- **Move Over:** By law, motorists must move over or reduce speed when approaching law enforcement or emergency vehicles, including tow trucks. If it's not safe to move over, the driver must slow to a speed that is at least 15 miles per hour less than the posted speed limit, unless otherwise directed by a law enforcement officer.
- **Use caution in construction zones:** ALDOT will have no temporary lane closures for road work on interstates from noon Wednesday, Nov. 27, to midnight Sunday, Dec. 1. Still, be extra cautious when traveling through these areas, and obey posted speed limits.
- **Pandemic plan:** Keep in mind the current health protocols, and refer to information from Governor Kay Ivey, the Alabama Department of Public Health and the CDC for safety guidelines.
- **Enjoy the holiday:** Do, however, think before you drink. Select a designated driver in advance, call a cab, ride-share service or call a sober friend or family member to get you home safely.